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SUBJECT: UN SECRETARIAT SAYS NEPALIS SUPPORT EXPANDED UN
ROLE

REF: RICHELSONPH-KUMAR E-MAIL

1. (SBU) Summary. During a May 23 meeting with visiting IO/UNP Deskoff and USUN Poloff, UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) officer Tamrat Samuel briefed on his recently-completed visit to Nepal and India and outlined his views of a possible expanded role for the UN in Nepal. Samuel said nearly all GON officials he met had asked that the UN help monitor the cease-fire between the GON and the Maoists, supervise Maoist DDR, and provide electoral assistance. He also mentioned GON Prime Minister's request for a UN "witness" to peace talks as well as his own view that the international community should consider feeding Maoist supporters, but implied that neither request had consensus support within the GON. If Nepal were to request UN assistance, Samuel observed that monitoring could take place under a "national mechanism supported by a strong UN structure" that would be largely civilian in nature with a "small" military observer force. Although he could not yet say what authorization the UN would need to mount such an operation, Samuel opined that either a UNSC or a GA resolution could do the trick. He did not rule out expanding the mandate of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Nepal to take on these new functions, but argued that OHCHR in Geneva would be hard-pressed to organize the logistics necessary for a quick deployment of monitors. Ruefully acknowledging Indian objections to an expanded UN role in Nepal, Samuel reported that no senior UN officials plan to visit the region until it becomes clear whether the Nepalis will submit a formal request for UN assistance. Samuel appeared to take on board suggestions that the Nepalese Mission to the UN be involved in future consultations on Nepal. End Summary.

GON Wants an Expanded UN Role

2. (SBU) Samuel averred that the UN would determine its role in Nepal entirely based on the request of the GON. Although he said that Nepali officials had privately expressed a desire for the UN to mediate between the GON and the Maoists, Samuel acknowledged that the GON was unlikely to make such a request formally due to Indian sensitivities -- and he added that in any case, SYG Annan preferred that the Nepalis conduct their dialogue "on their own." Assuming the UN does not take on a mediation role, Samuel outlined several other possible areas of assistance: monitoring of the cease-fire between the GON and the Maoists, some role in supervising or observing Maoist DDR, and support for the Nepali electoral process. He emphasized that during his consultations in

Kathmandu, GON officials had voiced near-universal support for a UN role in all three areas. Speaking personally, Samuel suggested that the international community might also want to consider feeding Maoist supporters, provided that the guerillas abandon their tactic of extortion and forced taxation. While he acknowledged that the World Food Program (WFP) could not feed combatants, Samuel argued that the WFP could feed former combatants who had successfully undergone a DDR program. Although he mentioned GON Prime Minister Koirala's informal request that the UN serve as a "witness" to GON-Maoist negotiations, Samuel implied that there was not yet consensus within the GON on this issue.

Authorizing the UN to
Monitor the Cease-Fire

13. (SBU) In order for the UN to monitor the cease-fire between the GON and the Maoists, Samuel argued that the parties would first need to decide on a detailed code of conduct agreement that would define which acts would be considered "provocative." Monitoring would take place under a "national mechanism supported by a strong UN structure" that would report on respect for human rights, incidents of abductions and extortion, as well as conditions for elections (including an end to intimidation). Monitors would also have to report on military action in breach of the cease-fire, Samuel argued, which could possibly include decommissioning of weapons. Samuel observed that the monitoring structure should be largely civilian, with a "small military observer force." Asked how the UN would seek authorization for such a mission provided that the GON made a formal request, Samuel said he was still investigating this issue. He opined that either the UNSC or the GA could potentially authorize such a mission, but he did not rule out expanding the mandate of the present Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Nepal -- although he cautioned that pursuing this option might constrict the UN's ability to respond quickly. Samuel suggested the if the GON made a formal request for cease-fire monitors only a short time before they are needed, for example, UN OHCHR in Geneva would be unable to handle the logistics involved in such a deployment. He suggested that the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) would be better-placed to respond to such a fast-breaking situation, but even DPKO would need adequate time to prepare.

Managing Indian and
Nepali Sensitivities

14. (SBU) While reporting that Indian officials he met in New Delhi did not seem opposed to UN monitoring of a cease-fire between the GON and the Maoists, Samuel agreed that the GOI appeared to have backtracked on this issue. Despite India's views on UN cease-fire monitors, Samuel said he thought the GOI would still support a future role for the UN in providing electoral assistance and in supervising Maoist DDR -- but he acknowledged that even on these issues he had no clarity on exactly what type of UN role India backed or at what point it would offer its support. Asked about any future trips to the region by senior UN officials -- Special Adviser to the SYG Vijay Nambiar had previously suggested DPA U/SYG Gambari or DPA Asia Division Director Michael Williams could visit Kathmandu after Samuel's return -- Samuel reported that talk of future visits had been suspended until it became clear whether Nepal would request UN assistance. Per reftel, Poloff urged Samuel to include the Nepali Mission to the UN in his consultations in New York and to ensure they were included in any broader discussions on Nepal involving the Secretariat and other missions. While initially suggesting

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that the GON could be brought into the discussions over time, Samuel seemed to take the point about involving the Nepalis now when he realized their participation could help manage Indian sensitivities about an expanded UN role.
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